

Message Text

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TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.), SOPN, XF

SUBJECT:COMBINED MEDIA REPORT, MARCH 21, EVENING

FOR AMBASSADOR ANDERSON FROM S/PRS

NO. 41

WIRES:

1. AP AFTERNOON LEAD SCHWEID FROM JERUSALEM SAYS ISRAEL
AND EGYPT REPORTED NEAR AGREEMENT ON FOUR ELEMENTS OF
AGREEMENT, BUT DEPTH OF ISRAELI PULLBACK STILL UNRESOLVED.
HAK QUOTED "THERE IS STILL A GAP."

AGREEMENT REPORTED NEAR ON FOLLOWING POINTS:

--"CERTAIN ASSURANCES" FROM BOTH SIDES TO US, SOME PRIVATE
AND SOME PUBLIC

--MUTUAL OBLIGATION AGAINST RECOURSE TO FORCE FROM BOTH
SIDES

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--ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL DONE IN STAGES

--UN FORCES TO TAKE OVER MOST BUT NOT ALL OF FREED TERRITORY.

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US OFFICIALS CAUTIONED THAT DEADLOCK STILL POSSIBLE, ESPECIALLY OVER WITHDRAWAL LINE. HIGH US OFFICIAL SAID, "WE'RE NOT AT THE BRINK OF AN AGREEMENT." BOTH SIDES EASING THEIR STANDS AND HAK REPORTED CLOSER TO A FRAMEWORK FOR AGREEMENT. DAYAN CITED FROM JERUSALEM POST THAT PEACE WITH ARABS CLOSER THAN EVER BEFORE, US AND USSR NOT WILLING TO SETTLE FOR CEASE-FIRE: BOTH WANT A SETTLEMENT. HAK IS BEST MEDIATOR. (NO UPI SINCE NOON)

2. ABC EVENING NEWS, REASONER, 5 MINUTES INTO PROGRAM REPORTED THAT IN THE ME HAK IS REORTED TO BE MAKING CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS IN WORKING ON A NEW SINAI DIS-ENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL. DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT TED KOPPEL REPORTS:

KOPPEL: HAK, THE ONE WHO COULD ALWAYS BE COUNTED UPON FOR A SNAPPY "FRUITFUL, CONSTRUCTIVE, OR BUSINESSLIKE" ARRIVAL OR DEPARTURE STATEMENT, HAS ALL BUT DISAPPEARED. HIS THOUGHTS NOW ARE ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY REFLECTED BY THAT NONE-TOO-MYSTERIOUS BUT STILL UNIDENTIFIED SENIOR US OFFICIAL ABOARD HIS PLANE. AN AGREEMENT, IN OTHER WORDS, IS CLOSE ENOUGH THAT HAK DOESN'T WANT TO JEOPARDIZE IT BY INCAUTIOUS COMMENTS ON THE RECORD.

LAST NIGHT IN ASWAN, PRESIDENT SADAT COLLABORATED IN THE SILENCE. BUT HIS SPOKESMAN, AMBASSADOR BASHIR LENT SUPPORT TO THE GROWING FEELING THAT COMPROMISE IS IN THE AIR.

(FILM CLIP OF PRESS CONF.) Q. IS IT POSSIBLE THAT THIS AGREEMENT COULD BE IMPLEMENTED IN PHASES, WITHIN A LIMITED PERIOD OF TIME? BASHIR: IF THE PHASES HELP THE ISRAELIS, AND WHETHER THEY ARE VERY SHORT IN TIME, AND THEY ARE NOT JUST A TACTIC OF OBSTRUCTION OF THE WAY, MAYBE THESE COULD BE ACCOMMODATED IN THE AGREEMENT.

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KOPPEL: THERE HAS ALREADY BEEN COMPROMISE ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS: ISRAEL HAS REPORTEDLY DROPPED ITS INSISTENCE ON AN EGYPTIAN PLEDGE OF NON-BELLIGERENCY, IN EXCHANGE FOR A MAJOR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE SINAI. THE TERM THAT HAS BEEN AGREED UPON IS A "NO RECOURSE TO FORCE" PLEDGE, WHICH IS LESS BINDING FROM THE LEGAL POINT OF VIEW. A NUMBER OF COMMITMENTS, WHICH THE TWO SIDES ARE UNWILLING TO GIVE ONE ANOTHER DIRECTLY, FOR EXAMPLE EGYPT DROPPING THE

ECONOMIC BOYCOTT AGAINST ISRAEL, SUCH COMMITMENTS WILL NOW BE MADE INDIRECTLY, THROUGH THE US. MOST OF THE TERRITORY THAT ISRAEL EVENTUALLY VACATES IN THE SINAI WOULD, UNDER THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT, BE OCCUPIED BY UN FORCES. WORK HAS ALREADY BEGUN ON DRAWING THE PRECISE LINES OF AN ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL.

THIS AFTERNOON, HAK MET THE ISRAELI NEGOTIATING TEAM, THEN WENT INTO SESSION WITH THE FULL ISRAELI CABINET. HAK BROKE HIS PUBLIC SILENCE TO ALMOST ANSWER A REPORTER'S QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE GAP HAS BEEN NARROWED.

HAK: GAPS CAN NARROW AND STILL REMAIN, AND THERE'S STILL A GAP.

KOPPEL: FOLLOWING THE CABINET MEETING, KISSINGER AND THE ISRAELI NEGOTIATING TEAM CONVENED AGAIN DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE JEWISH SABBATH HAS BEGUN. TOMORROW, KISSINGER RETURNS TO EGYPT.

3. NBC NIGHTLY NEWS, TWELVE MINUTES AFTER START:

TBROKAW: SECRETARY KISSINGER MET TODAY WITH THE ISRAELI CABINET. THE CABINET MEETING CONTINUED PAST THE BEGINNING OF THE ISRAELI SABBATH, AND THAT BROUGHT SPECULATION THAT A VERY IMPORTANT DECISION WAS BEING TAKEN. BUT VALERIANI, WHO IS TRAVELLING WITH HAK, REPORTS THAT THE SECRETARY IS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT A NEW TROOP PULLBACK AGREEMENT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT, AFTER TWO WEEKS OF HIS SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY. (NO VALERIANI)

4. CBS NEWS, 14 MINUTES INTO SHOW: ROGER MUDD: HAK FLEW FROM EGYPT TO ISRAEL TODAY TO TRY TO GET BOTH SIDES CLOSER TO ANOTHER SINAI AGREEMENT. PROSPECTS ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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BRIGHTER THAN THEY WERE EARLIER IN THE DAY, BECAUSE OF SOME LAST MINUTE CONCESSIONS FROM SADAT.

KALB: THE EGYPTIAN LEADER AGREED TO DEMILITARIZE MOST OF THE AREAS ISRAEL WILL EVACUATE. HE ALSO AGREED TO A LONG MANDATE FOR THE UN POLICE FORCE. AND ON THE KEY HANGUP HOW TO RELATE THE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO AN EGYPTIAN PLEDGE OF NO WAR, THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS, BUT STILL NOT ENOUGH TO CLOSE THE GAP.

KISSINGER RETURNED TO JERUSALEM TODAY, KNOWING HE'S AS CLOSE TO A BREAKTHROUGH IN THIS NEGOTIATION AS HE IS TO A BREAKDOWN. MUCH DEPENDED ON ISRAEL'S REACTION TO EGYPT'S LATEST IDEAS. ALMOST IMMEDIATELY THE SECRETARY WENT INTO CONFERNECE WITH PM RABIN. FOR THE

FIRST TIME, MAPS OF THE SINAI WERE BROUGHT INTO THE ROOM, SUGGESTING KISSINGER HAD CERTAIN IDEAS ABOUT WHERE THE LINE OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL WAS TO BE DRAWN. CLEARLY TO THE EAST OF THE TWO STRATEGIC PASSES AND THE OILFIELDS, MEANING ISRAEL WOULD GIVE THEM UP, IN EXCHANGE FOR SOME KIND OF AN EGYPTIAN PLEDGE THAT STOPS SHORT OF NON-BELLIGERENCY, PROMISES A PERIOD OF NONAGGRESSION. HAK'S COMPROMISE PHRASE IS "NON-RECOURSE TO FORCE." FOR RABIN, TO ACCEPT THIS COMPROMISE REQUIRED AN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE ISRAELI CABINET, ALL THE MORE EXTRAORDINARY SINCE IT TOOK PLACE ON THE SABBATH. RABIN THEN PLANNED MEETING WITH HAK AGAIN, AGAIN THAT NEGOTIATION HAS NOW REACHED THE MAKE OR BREAK POINT. THE TENSION WILL SNAP THIS WEEKEND, ONE WAY OR THE OTHER...

LATE PAPERS:

LA TIMES RESTON AND DRUMMOND REPORT THURSDAY'S ISRAELI PROPOSALS AND HAK TRIP TO ASWAN ON PAGE 1.

BALTIMORE NEWS AMERICAN PAGE 2 WALLACH STORY HEADLINEED "HAK MAY MEET SOVIETS ON ME".

NO NEW INSIGHTS IN ARTICLE

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